

The Comanches

411 was held in place with glue and firmly wrapped with wet sinew,
which in turn was glued and rubbed to a smooth finish.

411 The Comanches relied almost entirely on metal for arrow points
325 after they came in contact with the whites. Barrel hoops, bindings for
boxes, even frying pans and similar pieces of metal furnished excellent material. The piece of metal was sharpened on one end and on both sides. After the point was sharpened, it was hardened by heating it in a fire and then dropping it while red-hot into cold water. The Mexican traders not only supplied iron for the points but files with which to fashion and sharpen the arrowheads. Metal arrowheads became an important item of trade among most American Indian tribes.

Hundreds of thousands were manufactured yearly by eastern traders to be exchanged for furs. They were put in packages of one dozen each, cost the trader six cents a package and were the means for obtaining enormous profits. Usually one package was exchanged for a buffalo robe.¹³

There were two general types of metal arrowheads, one for game and one for war. The game point had no barb and was easily extracted, while the war point was barbed and loosely attached to the shaft. Some war points had but one barb, which, when shot into a body and the shaft pulled, caught in the flesh, and the point turned crosswise in the wound, making it impossible to extract it without tearing or cutting.

411 Before the acquisition of metal, arrows were made of stone, bone,
324 or horn. Flint appears to have been the most popular, and some preferred it even after the introduction of metal. It has been claimed that wounds made by flint arrow points were more likely to be fatal than those of metal. The Comanches apparently did little grinding or polishing of flint. Indeed, the nature of much of the flint of the Comanche country rendered such treatment unnecessary. Lehmann has left an account of one method of making stone arrowheads, but whether it was Apache or Comanche is uncertain, the implication being that the method was common among both tribes.

¹³ Garretson, *op. cit.*, 180.